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## Apostolate of Pius XI in Social Action

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*Excerpts from address delivered at the National Catholic Social  
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N. C. W. C. News Service.*

**T**HE apostolate of Social Action of Pope Pius XI, apart from the divine guidance of the Holy Ghost given to him as the only world-teacher of morality, implies an arduous life study of every aspect of fundamental questions dealing with the welfare of human society.

More than sixteen years ago Pius XI ascended the watch-tower of Peter. His vigilance has astonished the world. He has studied profoundly during these years the whole human family. He has observed every group. He is as familiar with the neo-pagan degradation of poverty as if he were living in the midst of it; he knows its causes, its history. Pius XI, as the Apostle of the oppressed, knows the height and depth and fulness of the oppression of all the children of men. He speaks as a true Father who loves his poor and oppressed children.

Every pressing human problem of the social order has been studied by Pius XI. Every aspect has been considered and solutions have been offered that have surpassed in their wisdom those proposed by the wisest of worldly men. On one occasion I was privileged to have the Holy Father say to me, while speaking of the evils of today and their solution: "If we expect to be heard, we must speak so plainly that we cannot possibly be misunderstood."

### CORRECTION OF MORALS

Pius XI has spoken so clearly on the reform of the social order in the State and on the correction of morals that he cannot be misunderstood. We must be sincerely grateful to the Department of Social Action of the National Catholic Welfare Conference for interpreting the mind of our Holy Father, and for promoting Discussion Clubs and Industrial Conferences which have done so much in our country to make social justice better understood. Its greater task, however, is before it; namely, to have social justice applied.

It is wrong to think of the social and economic question as one belonging exclusively to the material order, and therefore one that does not fall within the competence of the Church. . . . If men lie or are dishonest in economics, the Church must show them that this is bad morality. If the economic laws of a State do not conform to the unchangeable code of morals, it is the duty of the Church to show directly that they are bad morally. Indirectly, it becomes evident that they are also bad economics.

Pius XI is thoroughly familiar with the extraordinary problem of unemployment in our country and its serious consequences to the social order. His grave concern is to make the whole world recognize the right of every man to work honestly and to work under

human conditions and to receive human wages which will allow him either to maintain his family in modest comfort and reasonable security, or to give him the assurance that he can marry and found a home under these conditions. The Holy Father's social concern is to strengthen the family economically and spiritually, and so bring about a lasting reform which will benefit both State and Church.

### POPE REALIZES SUFFERING

The Pope's paternal heart goes out to the countless thousands in our country who are hungry, to the sick poor, especially those who are utterly neglected, and to those who are without shelter. He knows our extreme riches and our extreme poverty. He longs to aid the poor, the unemployed, and the sick in our slums. He realizes the sad plight of the Negro in our country . . .

Poverty, cold, hunger, unemployment, and resulting sickness are giving men little or no opportunity to work for their soul's salvation, are embittering them, poisoning their minds and hearts, turning them against religion, and making many who could be useful members of society dangerous radicals. The degradation of their poverty and the inhuman conditions under which they live make many of them vicious and arouse in them a violence of passion which seems beyond control.

Our country is engaged in mass production. We have also taught the whole world mass production. Consequences not anticipated by the industrial capitalists call for adjustments which should be made in justice and in charity. Groups that engage in mass production for profit only have a driving force that knows no moderation. They cannot be expected to see the evils of over-industrialization. Capitalists who see limitless opportunities for gain cannot weigh

with a calm judgment the dangers and injustice arising from overcapitalization.

If capitalists and industrialists could live for a few months under the same conditions that millions of deserving unemployed men, eager to work, are forced to live, there would be the beginning of a real understanding between capital and labor.

While Pius XI condemns in strong language the evil of capitalism and states fearlessly the case against the unjust treatment accorded the poor and laboring man, he never arrays class against class. With perfect detachment from the spirit of the capitalist and industrialist, the Holy Father sees clearly that strange perversion which frequently is the companion of wealth and which makes the wealthy oppressors of the poor and laboring classes. . . . Pius XI always speaks as the Father who loves all his children, whatever be their differences. As the Common Father, his heart goes out to all classes. He loves all, he seeks to serve all.

#### CALLS FOR REFORM

Pope Pius calls for "the reform of the social order and the correction of morals." The reform of the social order refers principally to the State. We should not infer from this that the Holy Father wishes to change the structure of our government. Christ did not come to found an earthly kingdom, nor even to direct earthly rulers in dealing with matters purely civil. . . .

We have an excessive number of societies which often work at cross purposes. They are organized to promote the interest of all groups. Through them minorities often become powerful and dangerous, but these societies have no organic unity which binds them and enables them to serve the State as subsidiary organizations.

Our present duty is to help to restore the organic

form of social life. We need institutions organically linked with one another which will relieve the State, and do things by delegated civil authority. . . .

The Holy Father emphasizes the fact that there is a hierarchy in the social order. He says: "It is not true that all have equal rights in civil society. It is not true that there exists no lawful social hierarchy" (*Atheistic Communism*, 1937). There is a hierarchy of intelligence in the men with whom we associate. There is a hierarchy of resourcefulness, of beauty, of physical stature of men. If we consider the human body, we find there is a hierarchy in its members. . . .

#### MANY SOCIAL GROUPS

The varied groups of society are members of the social body. There is a hierarchy in its members. If all groups wished to be physicians, or lawyers, or scholars, or farmers, or engineers, we should have the disruption of society. It is natural that there be many social groups which are formed by reason of intellectual gifts, inclinations, and circumstances of individuals. It is advantageous that these groups be organically linked together for the common good. These members of the social body have naturally varied functions and dignity, which in no way militate against the nature and dignity of man. The dignity of working men certainly exceeds the dignity of lazy and voluntarily idle men.

There should be no misunderstanding of the words of the Holy Father. The varying social orders must not be understood as a necessity arising from nature, but, rather, as a advantage to the social body, they do not mean that the Pope wants anything which can be called servitude. The suggestion does not mean the breaking down of the framework of a constitution or of a State where justice prevails. For us it means that we work out in our American way something which will give our social orders the character of a

public legal entity which could settle business of minor importance.

Our labor and trade unions are not vocational groups, but they are very necessary to protect the laboring and oppressed classes according to our actual conditions. It is regrettable, however, that they are not taking a united stand for the common good of the rank and file of men who must live or eke out an existence by the sweat of their brow. There is no objection to having different types of unions, but there are serious objections to warfare between the unions. If peace prevailed among them, careful study should then enable their leaders to prepare a legislative program which would show the advantages of the re-establishment of graded hierarchical social orders and which would be most powerful in bringing peace to our whole country and securing social justice for the poor and for all who labor.

#### REVOLUTIONARY SPIRITS

The Pope insists on the correction of morals today. There are many revolutionary spirits who sincerely think that in Communism is to be found the remedy for the abuses of capitalism. Many who think they are guided by Marx feel that he offers a philosophy of life which will prove the panacea for the poor and the oppressed. Marx did not give us a philosophy; he gave us a technique of revolution. Marxism wants action. It has no interest in academic speculations. Whatever cannot be verified by experience is without value. Many who will not admit that they are followers of Marx are nevertheless infected by his false revolutionary technique.

It is manifest that one of the basic things which true Christian Social Action must do is to popularize the truth of fixed and immutable principles of morality. If these are not unchanged and unchangeable, then we must logically expect disorder, tragedy, and

revolution in society. Those seize and maintain political power who have might on their side. Without fixed principles of morality there can be no reform of society, there can be no peace among the nations. There is no commandment of love, either of God or of man. How infinitely superior is the law of the Gospel and of love over every other system.

## The American Tradition

MOST REV. EDWARD MOONEY, D.D.

*Excerpts from address delivered at the National Catholic Social Action Conference, Milwaukee, Wis., May 1-4, 1938,  
N. C. W. C. News Service.*

AS a nation then, we were baptized with a great Christian formula—the formula of justice and the general welfare. To establish justice is to demand from the citizen the practice of a great virtue, the virtue which makes us give every man his strict due. To promote the general welfare is to demand from the citizen the practice of an even greater virtue, the virtue of lending oneself in considerate cooperation with others to the achievement of purposes that benefit the whole body politic even at a sacrifice of immediate individual self-interest. The general welfare has a far wider scope than simple justice. It seeks the good of the community as a whole, the common weal, the *bonum commune* of the Christian centuries. Theologians of the older day spoke of the virtue it calls for as *general justice*; recent Encyclicals use the more apt and meaningful term *social justice*.

It is clear that the government which undertakes to *promote the general welfare* assumes a delicate and

far-reaching task. But it is inspiring to think that in an age when the policy of *laissez faire* was in full flower and fruit, the founders of our nation recognized that task of government and thus refused to turn against the Christian centuries and to canonize greed.

I would have you note that while the government was to *establish* justice, it was only to *promote* the general welfare. When we say that government is to establish justice we clearly denote, for instance, that government is to legislate against injustice, whether it be the injustice of an open theft that takes what a man already has, or, I might add, the injustice of a secret theft that keeps from an employe's paycheck the living wage to which he is entitled. When we say that government is to promote the general welfare, we just as clearly connote or imply that government was to leave to the citizens themselves the initiative in achieving general welfare, that government was to leave to the people themselves in the first instance the duty of making their ownership and work serve themselves and others. I like to think that the founding fathers sensed that here was something too personal, too complicated for government, alone and in the first instance, to undertake. No doubt they saw that government would then possess too far-reaching a power over the manifold activities of its citizens—a power which could be invoked some day, for example, to fix all prices and determine all incomes in what would turn out to be—as it has turned out to be in a country we all know—a fruitless and blighting effort to create even a minimum of human well-being. But in undertaking to promote the general welfare government did retain a function, did assume a duty—to give impetus, to afford guidance, to exercise effective supervision to the end that in the human relationships of production, distribution and exchange social justice should be observed.



### CORPORATIVE SYSTEM AND CORPORATIVE STATE DIFFERENT

During these days we have been considering this twofold, distinct but related responsibility of citizenry and government to work out and to carry out a constructive program of social justice. Happily for us as Christians and proudly for us as Americans, it is easy to see that the practical plan for a Christian social order outlined by Pope Pius XI squares absolutely with the fundamental ideas of government set forth in our American Constitution.

In this connection it might not be out of place to utter a word of warning against the misleading inferences of hasty and inaccurate thinking about the Papal program. The words *corporations* and *corporative system* have been used in the Encyclicals to designate these occupational groups and the social order of which they are the distinctive feature. "Ah," concludes the indiscriminating thinker in tones either of regret or exultation, depending on his attitude towards the Pope, "so the Pope is for the corporative state." "See," says the Sunday supplement writer, "the Pope is a Fascist." They are, indeed, a bit upset when in the same Encyclicals they read the Pope's restrained but unmistakable strictures on the corporative State as "substituting itself in the place of private initiative," as "excessively bureaucratic" and as being in danger of "serving particular political aims rather than contributing to the initiation of a better social order."

The truth, of course, is that there is a world of difference between a corporative system and a corporative State. The corporative system of social order is essentially a coordination of non-political vocational groups organized and controlled by the members themselves for the attainment of social justice in their mutual relationships of production, distribution, ex-

change or service. The corporative State is a State in which government welds these vocational groups into its own very framework as genuine organs and institutions of the State, controls them utterly, and uses them to exercise its own domination over human relationships in production, distribution, exchange and service. The difference, it strikes me, is something like the difference between the regulated physical contact between two bodies and their chemical fusion—and that's a real difference. Better yet, for us as Americans, the difference is brought out in the words of our Constitution which set up a government to promote and not to control the general welfare. The corporative social order of Pius XI fits into our fundamental American ideas of government and does not call for an American corporative State.

Our American system divides governmental powers among the federal authorities, the States, the counties and the cities or towns. The principle is followed that the governmental unit which best can deal with a situation should actually do so, that the governmental unit which embraces the people involved in any issue should deal with that issue.

The system of occupational groups sponsored in the social Encyclicals applies the same principle to economic activity. The people in the industries and professions, organized locally, regionally and nationally, bound together not merely according to the position they occupy in the labor market but according to the diverse functions they exercise in society would cooperate in making their ownership and their work productive of good for themselves and for society. In this system issues are dealt with by those who can thus do so because they are directly involved in them, rights are maintained and duties discharged by those who are closest to those rights and duties.

## CHRISTIAN SOCIAL ORDER

To sum up, then, a Christian social order envisages a well-defined partnership, dedicated to social justice and inspired by the charity of brotherhood in Christ, between government-federal, State or city—and the self-governing, democratically organized membership of the industries, of agriculture, of the trade and the professions. Who that knows the genius of America as expressed in our governmental ideals and institutions can fail to see that such a Christian social order represents a truly American opportunity? Who that sees this can fail to see further that it represents a distinctively American Catholic responsibility?

The social Encyclicals not only formulate principles; they propose a program for a Christian social order. A world in ferment is looking for a program—not merely for what the practical man will call vague principles. The thinking part of our American world will essay the proposals of that program in the light of their adaptability to national traditions and institutions which rightly are still held sacred. Here as elsewhere economic individualism is intellectually bankrupt. Thinking men see that it is in reality the negation of a social program. In the reaction against the excesses of its heyday and against the general misery of its grand debacle, Individualism's favorite defense is to raise the cry *Americanism*, and to point to the spectre of government absolutism as the looming alternative. This defense is valid against Communism which invokes government absolutism for the pretended relief of the proletariat. This defense is valid, too, against the various types of Fascism which invoke government absolutism for the protection of property. This defense is not valid against the program for a Christian social order which the great Encyclicals adopt. That program stands for the protection of private property and for the uplift of the

proletariat through a more just distribution of that property but it does not stand for any sort of government absolutism. On the contrary, that program retains, in its system of occupational groups, the democratic processes which Americans revere, and reflects, in its attitude towards government's part in economic life, the traditional Christian principles which the founding fathers wrote into our American Constitution. A Christian social order, therefore, not only presents a real American opportunity; it represents our only opportunity to save the things for which we love America.

## **Christian Social Order: Some Basic Principles**

*Statement issued by the Most Rev. Edwin V. O'Hara and Most Rev. Karl J. Alter at the close of the National Catholic Social Action Conference, Milwaukee, Wis., May 1-4, 1938.*

1—That industrial and financial power must not be divorced from social responsibility; such power must always have in view the good of the industry or business as a whole and also the common good.

2—That a prominent aim of industry should be to provide stable employment so as to eliminate the insecurity and the other social ills that arise from excessive changes of employment and residence.

3—That as machinery is introduced into industry workers thereby displaced should be guaranteed adequate protection.

4—That employment should be available for workers at not less than a family living income.

5—That a Christian Social Order in America will look forward to some participation by employes in profits and management.

6—That a wide distribution of ownership of property should be encouraged by legislation.

7—That there should be limitations of hours of labor in keeping with human need for rest and relaxation. This is especially true in regard to the labor of women and young persons. The industrial employment of children outside of the family should be prohibited.

8—That monopoly should be controlled in the public interest.

9—That collective bargaining through freely chosen representatives be recognized as a basic right of labor.

10—That minimum wage standards be set up by law for labor unprotected by collective bargaining.

11—That the legitimacy of the profit motive in the development and conduct of business be frankly recognized; and its control in the interest of the common good should not aim at its extinction.

12—That there must be an increase of wealth produced, if there is to be an adequate increase of wealth distributed.

13—That a proper objective of monetary policy is to avoid rapid and violent fluctuations in commodity price levels.

14—That after a man has given his productive life to industry, he should be assured of security against illness and dependent old age.

15—That a balance must be maintained between industrial and agricultural population, and between the rewards for industrial and agricultural activity.

16—That a healthy agricultural system will encourage the family farm rather than the commercial farm.

17—That a Christian Social Order involves decent housing for all the people.

18—That the family, rather than the individual, is the social and economic unit: and its needs

should be recognized both by industry and by the State.

19—That there are natural rights possessed by human persons and families which God has given and which the State cannot abrogate

20—That a Christian Social Order, organized on the basis of self-governing industries and professions, according to the plan proposed by Pius XI in his Encyclical on *Reconstructing the Social Order* will promote social justice and establish industrial peace.

21—That a Christian Social Order can be maintained only on the basis of a full acceptance of the person and teachings of Jesus Christ.

## Government and Social Justice

REV. RAYMOND A. MCGOWAN

*Address delivered at the National Catholic Social Action Conference, May 1, 1938.*

**J**USTICE demands the living wage. Social justice demands the living wage. Social justice demands of us all that the general welfare requires. Social justice demands that when a company or industry cannot physically pay a fair wage that its employers and its labor shall cooperate, and the government shall help them, to put it in the way to pay and if they fail, then either subsidize the workers or close up.

### SOCIAL JUSTICE DEMANDS

Social justice demands that distribution of our national income and those balanced prices that will make employment steady and complete. It demands the distribution which will let all share fairly in our increasing income. It demands that the non-owning

workers get enough to save and rise to ownership. It demands the incomes and prices that will bring full use of our resources for a high standard of living for all the people.

We cannot live up to those moral laws without organizing ourselves in every industry and every profession and then inter-organizing.

We grow into this full program through labor unions, including those of white collar workers, and employers' associations, through farm cooperatives and professional bodies.

### ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

But government has a place. The principle is twofold. A government must, itself, on its own, so regulate property, income and work, and competition and the new domination by wealth, corporations and finance, that the people will all have work and all have a good livelihood.

Secondly, in doing so government must, as far as possible, protect, foster, rely on and guide the people's own organizations in industry, farming, trade and the professions so they themselves will be establishing justice and promoting the general good—so they themselves, with its help, will be reducing and then ending the unemployment and poverty that disgrace us, and create the Christian Social Order of justice, social justice and social charity.

Government shall protect and enforce strict justice. It shall in addition to what the natural and divine law commands define what property owners must further do to make their ownership serve the general welfare.

### DUTIES LISTED

It shall join in deciding upon and obtaining that form itself of private ownership which shall best bring about the general welfare.

It shall make sure that the laws and institutions and the general character and administration of the country shall be such as of themselves to realize public well-being and private prosperity.

It shall protect the community and its every element and in doing so have special regard for the weak and the poor.

It shall pass laws on the life, health, strength, housing conditions, workshops, wages and hazardous work of the working people and particularly of women and children.

It shall help employers and labor to put companies and industries in a position to pay a living wage.

It shall control free competition and still more the new despotism of wealth and of corporate and credit-control and keep them within justice and the common good.

#### THE MORAL LAW

It shall insist on the moral law of economic life.

It shall preserve freedom but a just freedom that does no injustice and secures the common good.

It shall own those things which would let the private owners dominate the community.

It shall promote international economic cooperation.

This set of principles justifies a far-reaching program of laws and government action. In Catholic social teaching there is no trace of anti-government. Government is the sovereign protector and promoter of justice and the common temporal good.

The second part of government's duty in Catholic social teaching is of key importance. It is in this legislation and the administration of it for government to devolve as much power as possible on organized industry and the professions so they themselves, the growing Christian Social Order itself, can do the



job of ending the unemployment, the poverty and the waste.

Here we stand face to face with a central issue. We do not reject legislation, for then we would succumb to poverty and unemployment and to a control of our lives by a handful of wealthy men. Too, the people in anger would finally revolt. Yet, if we should rely only on legislation, we turn always more and more work over to government until government does or attempts to do about everything.

Let me say that neither a do-nothing nor a do-a-little government, nor a do-much government, nor a do-all government is right, but rather a new and different idea of government functions is the answer to the government riddle of our time.

And the answer is this: In every law on the regulation of ownership and work, as much use as possible in an always increasing measure must be made of voluntarily organized employers' associations and labor unions, farmers' organizations and professional bodies, that is, a growing Christian Social Order, in both writing the laws and administering them, and with whatever government help and supervision is needed, as much power as possible must be given to them to put our economic house in order.

### CHIEF PRINCIPLES

The chief principles are these: Government should protect the organization of the industries and professions and foster them and should leave to them the first direction of economic life for justice and the common good, but as needed should direct them further, watch them, stimulate them and restrain them so that we shall make economic life produce to the fullest, hire to the fullest and give to the fullest the livelihood all of us need for physical, mental, moral and spiritual welfare.

The things to note are three, protection of every

move toward the self-government of the industries and professions, fostering of every such move, and as needed a further direction, stimulation, supervision and restraint of their activities, protection, fostering and guidance.

### POINTS SUMMARIZED

This session presents what may seem to some of you a new idea. Instead it is merely new in our time. Boiled down all that has been said is this:

People are obliged to try to make their ownership and work obtain full employment, full output and a good living for everybody. To do that they have to organize in their work and their ownership. Governmental protection, fostering and guidance of this organization is also needed and sometimes government must step outside of such organization to act on its own.

By saying that people are obliged to try to make ownership and work serve the common good, this session contradicts the idea that the way to get the common good is for everyone to try for his own interests, first, last and all the time, and for the government therefore merely to keep people from killing and from violently stealing.

It contradicts that newer idea that a little government regulation and a little unionism are all that is needed to make the beneficence of individual greed fundamentally sound. It contradicts also the idea that we should have government do everything, whether under a system of private ownership or common ownership.

The idea discussed here makes government more important than in the older practice and less important than in the aberrations that disgrace Europe now.

# **New Index of Prohibited Books and List of Indulgences**

**T**HE new edition of the Index of Prohibited Books has been published by the Vatican Polyglot Press for the Sacred Congregation of the Holy Office. The volume reproduces the previous Index, published in 1929, and includes all additions made to it up to the end of February, 1938. It contains not only the alphabetical list of the books prohibited by the Church, but also the preface written by Cardinal Merry del Val in June, 1929, for the previous edition. In that preface the late Cardinal summarized the rules followed by the Church from the beginning of her history to preserve the Faithful from the contagion of erroneous and immoral doctrines which might be spread through the circulation of such books. This preface is worthy of note inasmuch as it very clearly shows the right possessed by the Church to use her authority to censure harmful books.

Competent authority, when it impedes the diffusion of highly deleterious doctrinal errors and seeks to take out of circulation writings that may cause the loss of faith or corrupt good habits, instead of opposing liberty saves it from the defects into which it might easily fall through human weaknesses.

For the first twelve centuries, the reading of the Holy Scriptures was very familiar to Christians, as appears from the homilies of the Holy Fathers and from the sermons of the Sacred orators of the Middle Ages, nor did the ecclesiastical authority intervene to stop it. It was only after the abuses of the heretics, especially the Waldensians, the Albigenses and followers of Wycliff, and, in general, the Protestants, that Pontiffs and the Councils found themselves often obliged to regulate and sometimes even impede the divulagation of the Bible in the vernacular. However, it is not just to affirm that the Church has absolutely forbidden the publication of the Bible in the vulgar tongue. It is enough to remember that in the seventy years between the invention of printing and the publication of the German version of the Bible by Luther, more than 200 editions of Holy Scriptures in various languages, circulated among peoples, were duly approved of by the Church.

## COLLECTION OF INDULGENCES

The Tribunal of the Sacred Apostolic Penitentiary has had published by the Pontifical Publishing House, Marietti of Turin, the official collection of indulgenced prayers and pious works.

In 1898 the Sacred Congregation of Indulgences and Holy Relics issued a similar publication. This was followed by an Appendix, and also by a small volume published in 1929 by the Sacred Apostolic Penitentiary which has, meanwhile, after the suppression of the Sacred Congregation of Indulgences, passed under the competency of the Tribunal of the same Sacred Penitentiary. All these publications, however, were not a clear and sure guide. For this reason the Holy Father entrusted to His Eminence, Lorenzo Cardinal Lauri, the Major Penitentiary, the task of making a complete and organic collection of all the indulgences.

The publication is extremely interesting, for it is not a mere collection or lists of indulgenced prayers and pious works, but a complete rearrangement of these spiritual gifts more in correspondence with the character of our times.

It will be at once seen that, from the organic point of view, these four criterions are now adopted by the Church:

1. Prayers and pious exercises in honor of the Blessed Trinity, of Our Lord Jesus Christ and of Our Lady, are more indulgenced than prayers and pious exercises in honor of other saints;

2. The acts of public devotion are more indulgenced than those of private;

3. Liturgical prayers are more indulgenced than non-liturgical;

4. No devotion of a private nature is more indulgenced than the general devotion of the Church.

The volume also reproduces the Canons of the Codex of the Canon Law relative to indulgences.